

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

5 An invention is described herein that provides methods and apparatus for
collecting, distributing and storing product data. A data structure suitable for use in
collecting, distributing or storing product data for use in a catalog is disclosed. More
particularly, the data structure is based on a data model having one or more classes, 5 3
where each of the classes has one or more associated categories. The data structure
includes at least one class definition, each class definition being arranged to identify
one or more associated categories. In addition, the data structure includes a plurality
10 of category definitions, each category definition being arranged to identify an 5 1
associated attribute group. The data structure further includes a plurality of attribute
group definitions, where each attribute group definition is arranged to identify one or
more attributes that are associated with the attribute group. In order to assist in the
capture of data, each attribute has an associated possible value list that identifies 5 3
15 values that are selectable as values for the associated attribute.